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Reserve

Ozark National Forest

ARKANSAS



Land of the white oak

F-204386



This folder contains a map of the Ozark National Forest and adjacent areas, with information about its timber, water, forage, and recreational resources.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE, EASTERN DISTRICT

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OZARK NATIONAL FOREST

BY

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The name Ozark has an unusual and almost universal appeal. The dwellers in the shadow of the Ozark Mountains feel a pardonable pride in the natural beauty of the rugged sky line, the massive grandeur of the mountains, and the crystal clearness and transparency of the mountain streams. Even those living at a distance are familiar with the name, famous both in song and story, and associate it with a mountain wonderland.

Ozark National Forest and Game Preserve, which takes its name from the Ozark Mountains, is in the high plateau country rising from the central plains of Arkansas, about a



F-211775

Young pines in Ozark National Forest, the promise of future timber harvests

hundred miles west of the Mississippi, on the watersheds of the Arkansas and White Rivers. It contains 334,937 acres dedicated to permanent public use, under the administration of the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture. It is made up of an eastern block in Baxter and Stone Counties, a central block in Newton, Searcy, Pope, and Johnson Counties, and a western block in Franklin, Washington, and Crawford Counties. The original sandstones and shales of the region have weathered to sandy loam and clay soils, capable of producing successive crops of high-grade timber.

The purpose of this folder is to set forth the most important facts concerning this great public property and to outline its chief elements of value to State and Nation. It is being managed by the Forest Service to the end that it may yield the utmost as a great timber farm, as a protection to the watersheds of the lower Mississippi Valley, as a place of safety for its furred and feathered denizens, and as a beautiful and healthful recreation area.

As History Tells Us

Cherokee Indians first held dominion over these richly stocked hunting grounds. The French next laid claim to the region. That greatest of all real estate transactions—the Louisiana Purchase—then transferred the title from France to the United States. Almost immediately the westward rush of white civilization began. In 1814 the present town of Batesville was a village of some twenty families and the extreme outpost of civilization in this part of Arkansas. The ever-increasing tide of immigration pushed to the south and west, up the broad fertile valleys of White River, and circled farther south into the coastal plain areas and rich alluvial soils along the Arkansas.

Not until 1820 did actual settlement begin in the Ozark highlands. In July of that year Captain Washburn led a party to a point on Illinois Bayou and founded a mission post at Dwight. Here homes were erected for the members of the party and a schoolhouse for the education of the Cherokees and the few white children of the settlement was built. In this building, a poorly constructed log structure, with an open fireplace at one end of the one long room, the first school in Arkansas opened January 1, 1822.

By 1829 the settlement of the Ozarks was in active progress. There were no roads, but the heavily laden wagons of the pioneers, pulled by plodding ox teams, pushed slowly farther and farther up the stream courses. In 1838 there were isolated settlements on Richland Creek, White River, Big Piney River, and Illinois Bayou. By 1844 settlement was well under way on the higher and thinner-soiled plateau lands.

Many were the troubles of these early settlers. The forest supplied building material, fuel, and game, but also harbored wolves and bear that played havoc with the cattle. A journey to the nearest trading post for a few meager supplies was a task of no mean proportions. Little could be grown on these remote farms that would pay the cost of hauling to market. Agricultural development was very slow.

Legislation designed to protect the settlers actually permitted large areas of public domain to be acquired for the timber stands only. The lack of roads made it impossible to cut any but the highest grade timber, and that brought miserably poor returns. The lack of revenue made impossible any appreciable development in roads, schools, or other necessities of community life.

With the clearings and timber operations, the practice of woods burning developed, still further depleting the resources of the region. The forest seemed to represent to the settlers everything that was to their disadvantage and, consequently, the practice of woods burning for all sorts of imaginary gains became established among the forest dwellers. They burned to make the grass greener, to kill ticks, to drive out wolves, and to protect their own buildings from some other settler's fire. Herein civilization defeated its own progress. Such methods could not but check development. As a result, these settlements declined without much further expansion, leaving many thousands of acres of unexploited public domain.

The National Forest Established

Such was the condition of the Ozarks when, in 1908, President Roosevelt signed the proclamation creating Ozark National Forest, withdrawing from entry all this great area of public land and dedicating it to perpetual public service. Since this proclamation each acre has been carefully examined to determine its fitness for the forest, with the result that the agricultural areas have been eliminated and returned to entry for homestead and farming purposes.

Organization

Ozark National Forest is one of 15 national forests in the Eastern National Forest District, in charge of the district forester at Washington, D. C. Directly in charge of this forest is the forest supervisor, with headquarters at Russellville, Ark., and his staff of three assistants. The forest is divided into four ranger districts, each in charge of a district ranger, with headquarters at Mountain View, Hector, Cowell, and Cass, respectively. The ranger is immediately responsible for the administration of his district. He is the agent of the Forest Service, in direct contact with the users of the forest. He enforces the various regulations in regard to timber sales, grazing, or other uses, and protects the forest from damage by fire or vandalism.

The National Forest—a Valuable Property

The supervisor and rangers have under their care a public property containing 334,937 acres, with a value conservatively estimated at \$3,500,000. There is at present a stand of merchantable timber amounting to 443,650,000 feet board measure, in addition to the younger trees that will reach merchantable size in the future. This timber is logged under plans carefully worked out to insure that the amount



F-205652

Trained forest officers select the trees to be cut. Young trees are left for future growth

cut during any period does not exceed the growth for the same period. Only the mature or defective trees are removed, the smaller trees being left with conditions favorable for future growth.

Under this system it is estimated that the forest will yield 18,000,000 board feet each year—not for this year only, or next year, but perpetually. And as the forest recovers

under proper management from past mistreatment, the yield can be increased. At an assumed stumpage rate of \$5 per thousand feet, the sale value of 18,000,000 feet would be \$90,000. Under existing law, 25 per cent of the gross national forest receipts is returned to the State and the counties in which the forest lies, to be used by the county officers for road and school expenses. An additional 10 per cent is used by the Forest Service in the development and improvement of roads and trails in and near the forest.

Even under present conditions, during this period when it is necessary to restrict cuttings, the return per acre to the counties from the national forest is better than 50 per cent of the tax return from the best farm lands in the section. When full recovery is made from past damage the return



Protected forests produce wealth

F-224574

to the counties should greatly exceed the possible tax return.

It must be remembered that it takes years to undo the damage of almost a century of uncontrolled burning, and we can not expect this ultimate yield immediately. But, even during the period of reconstruction, there is an ever-increasing revenue from the forest.

The growing of timber on Ozark National Forest does not prohibit the use of the land for grazing, under proper control. Without damage to growing timber, the forest can support 20,000 head of cattle and 40,000 hogs, which, at the rates of 56 cents and 43 cents a head, respectively, for the summer months, would produce a revenue of \$37,000, resulting in a further return to the counties of \$5,500 for schools and \$7,400 for roads.

Watershed Protection

So much for the tangible, dollars-and-cents part of this valuable property. There are other values, less tangible, perhaps not so easily expressed in actual money, but none the less real and vital to the welfare of Arkansas and of the States lying farther down the Mississippi. Here are two large tributaries of the Mississippi with their upper branches rising in the heart of the Ozarks—the White River, fed by Sylamore Creek and its branches, Livingston Creek, Sugarloaf Creek, Sneeds Creek, and other streams; and the Arkansas River, fed by Big Piney Creek, Illinois Bayou, Mulberry River, and Little Red River. The sandy and sandy loam soils of the region, when robbed of their pro-



F-224024

Damage to farm lands in Newton County by flood from burned watershed

TECTIVE cover of trees, leaves, and humus, are easily washed and eroded. Rainfall in the Ozarks is comparatively heavy—about 45 to 50 inches per year—and a rainfall of 5 inches in 24 hours frequently occurs.

This enormous volume of water, some 565 tons per acre, under the urge of gravity, is capable of doing immediate and irreparable damage to the surrounding country if not subjected to a positive restraining influence. Uncontrolled it possesses the power to rob the Ozarks of their most fertile soil and deposit it in stream and river beds, there to impede or destroy navigation in the large channels. Properly controlled it represents an enormous source of hydroelectric

power. The protected, forested lands of Ozark National Forest help to supply the control that is necessary. The leaves and duff, accumulating under the stands of timber, protected against fire, act as a sponge, helping to stop the immediate run-off after storms and feeding the water gently and slowly to the springs and streams throughout the year. The protection and preservation of the forest mean not only better maintenance of fertile soil on the slopes and a more regular supply of water for the springs and streams, but also a greater stability for hydroelectric plants supplying light and power to the homes and the industries of the region and more assurance of unobstructed channels for the navigation of boats and barges.



F-224578

Deer to be placed in the Ozark National Forest game refuges

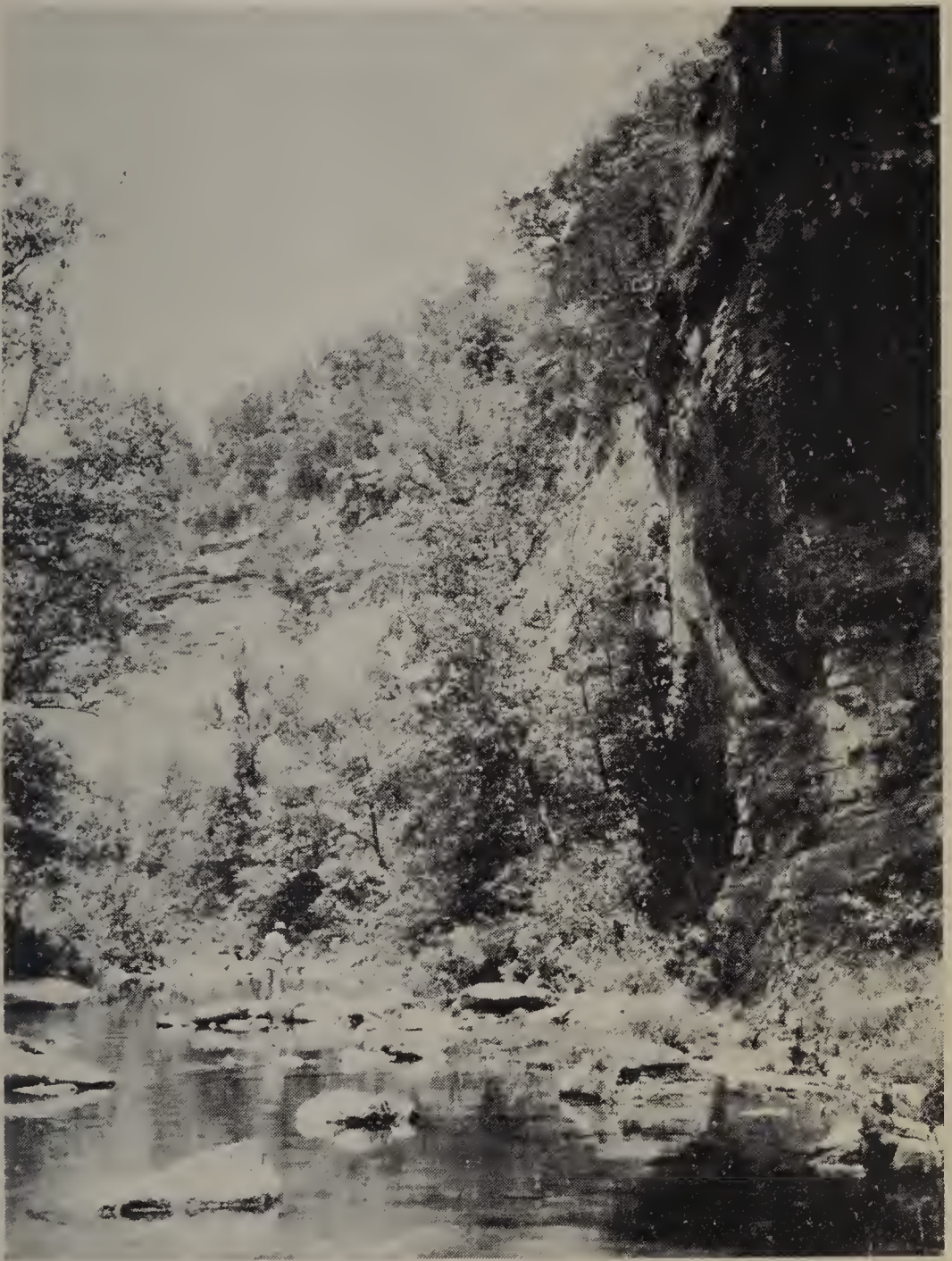
Wild Life Preservation

Forest animals in Ozark National Forest were rapidly approaching extinction, but in 1925 four large areas on the forest were designated as national game refuges. These areas are not fenced, but are carefully policed by the forest officers in cooperation with the State Fish and Game Department.

No hunting is allowed and no guns or dogs are permitted on these areas. As rapidly as funds are available the land is stocked with deer and wild turkey. A few years ago deer and turkey were hardly ever seen, but they are now not an uncommon sight along the principal highways. As the refuges become fully stocked, the surplus will overflow into

the surrounding areas where hunting is allowed under State game laws, and the sportsman will find a day's hunting worthy of his time and skill. For tenderfoot and old-timer alike, there's a thrill in the sight of a big buck with his head up, looking through the shadows of the oaks and pines.

Modern improved highways and forest roads lead from the State and national highways back into the hills of Ozark National Forest. There is good bathing and fishing in the clear, cool pools of Big Piney Creek, near Fort Douglas.



F-211772

Where the bass rules

Nature's Amphitheater at Pilot Rock and the steel observation tower near by attract the hiker, and everywhere the cool, inviting quietude of the forest offers relaxation to overwrought nerves.

Excellent sites for summer homes are available at Moccasin Gap, on the east slope of an elevation some 100 feet above the general elevation of the plateau and overlooking a large expanse of forest. Modern, sanitary camp sites are

being provided, offering comfort and convenience for the camper and safety for the forest through the removal of inflammable material and the construction of inclosed fire-places.

Accessibility

Ozark National Forest is now well along with a comprehensive program of road development. A total of 82.5 miles of forest highways and 55.5 miles of forest roads have been completed to date and 22.5 additional miles are under construction. After completion by the Forest Service, the forest highways—the main public thoroughfares through the forest—are turned over to the State for maintenance. The program contemplates an annual expenditure during the next five-year period of approximately \$35,000. When the



F-224575

Good roads make minor forest products valuable. Stave timber on Ozark National Forest

program is finished, there will be a road system of 293 miles throughout the forest that will make even the more remote parts accessible to the timber buyer, the recreation seeker, and the fire fighter. It is now possible to market at satisfactory stumpage prices large quantities of forest products which before the improved roads existed had no value and were, of necessity, left to decay in the woods.

In addition to the roads and motorways, there are 109 miles of improved bridle trails leading through the forest, all of easy grade and smooth tread, safe for the horseman day or night.

The Forest is Protected

On all the forested land of the State and Nation the first and most important task is protection against destruction or damage by fire. In Ozark National Forest this has been an exceptionally difficult task. Since the early settlements there has persisted among the mountain residents the belief that woods burning was a necessary part of farming. They burned the woods for supposed range improvement, without



F-224563

Lookout man going on duty at Freeman Springs Lookout

recognizing the fact that every fire destroyed the valuable range plants, leaving nothing but worthless sedge grass for forage. They burned to drive out the ticks, without perceiving that the burned areas were more heavily infested than the green timber. They burned because their fathers burned. And they could not understand why the communities became poorer and poorer, why their cattle were walking skeletons, why there were no community funds to repair the

roads—axle-deep in mud and ruts—or to repair or rebuild the tumbledown, ramshackle schoolhouses, which had served for years in a losing fight for better education.

Forest officers have attacked the task of fire prevention with determined energy. Up to 1923 it seemed a losing fight. In that year there were 239 fires in the forest and over 25,000 acres of forest were burned over. But this general conflagration seemed to mark the turning point in favor of the educational program.

To-day, with better roads; better communication, better schools, and a man-to-man, friendly, constructive contact, and cooperation between the forest officers and the local residents, the woods burner is rapidly disappearing and public opinion, the most powerful of all forces, is turning strongly in favor of forest protection. The results as shown in the community life have been remarkable, and roads, schools, homes, and stock are all showing a steady improvement.

How Fires are Controlled

There are still fires in spite of the improved conditions. Fires can never be entirely eliminated from the forest, any more than they have been in our cities, where inflammability is much lower and the best means of prevention and suppression are available. This fact calls for a carefully worked out plan of organization of highly trained men and a measure of preparedness comparable to the best city fire departments.

The organization starts with the detection system, the lookout towers located on high elevations and at strategic points so that the entire forest is visible from one or more of the towers. There are six such observatories on the forest, where men are stationed during the day and quartered near by at night, each one with the all-important duty of seeing all that is discernible from his post. From these towers an ever-increasing network of telephone lines radiates to the headquarters of forest ranger or chief dispatcher, whose duty it is to marshal his forces quickly and dispatch them to the fire.

The fire-fighting crews are equipped with motor transportation and fire tools. The tools are kept in sealed tool boxes, together with food supplies, so located that men, tools, and food can reach a fire in any part of the forest with the least possible delay. Local residents in the villages at ranger headquarters and other communities throughout the forest and the students at Russellville Polytechnic College con-

tribute valuable assistance and cooperation in fire control, and the whole job would be much more difficult without the willing cooperation of all the friends of the forest.

Forests Necessary to Arkansas

The future progress of our Nation depends, in no small degree, upon a plentiful and properly distributed timber supply. The development of the State of Arkansas depends to a considerable degree upon its own timber supply. The two great national forests in the State have a considerable part in providing the timber supply for the industries of the State and are, as well, pointing the way toward improved methods of forest protection and management of the privately owned timber lands.

There must also be dependable hydroelectric power. Here again the forest ties in directly with State prosperity in the



A quick get-away when fire is reported

F-224566

protection of the watersheds supplying the power.

Increasing population demands increasing recreation facilities, and Ozark National Forest will contribute greatly toward meeting this need.

Ozark National Forest is owned by the people, is managed and protected for the people, and is one of the greatest assets of the people not only of Arkansas but of the Nation as a whole.

It is yours, come and see it. The forest supervisor at Russellville will gladly supply you with information as to the use and opportunities of the forest, and the rangers stand ready and willing to extend to you every possible courtesy during your visit. They can help you to enjoy the forest and you can help them protect the forest—your forest—if you are careful, and to influence your friends to be careful and do all in your power to prevent fires.

Six Rules for the Prevention of Fire in the Forest

1. **Matches.**—Be sure your match is out. Break it in two before you throw it away.
2. **Tobacco.**—Be sure that pipe ashes and cigar or cigarette stubs are dead before throwing them away. Never throw them into brush, dead leaves, or needles.
3. **Making camp.**—Before building a fire, scrape away all inflammable material from a spot 5 feet in diameter. Dig a hole in the center and in it build your camp fire. Keep your fire small. Never build it against trees or logs, or near brush.
4. **Breaking camp.**—Never break camp until your fire is out—dead out.
5. **Brush-burning.**—Never burn slash or brush in windy weather. Keep your piles small. Plow four or five good furrows around the area. Clear around each pile. Have plenty of help; the wind may change. Don't leave until every spark is dead out.
6. **How to put out a camp fire.**—Stir the coals while soaking them with water. Turn small sticks and drench both sides. Wet the ground around the fire. If you can't get water, stir in earth and tread it down until packed tight over and around the fire. Be sure the last spark is dead.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
W. B. GREELEY, FORESTER

OZARK NATIONAL FOREST

ARKANSAS

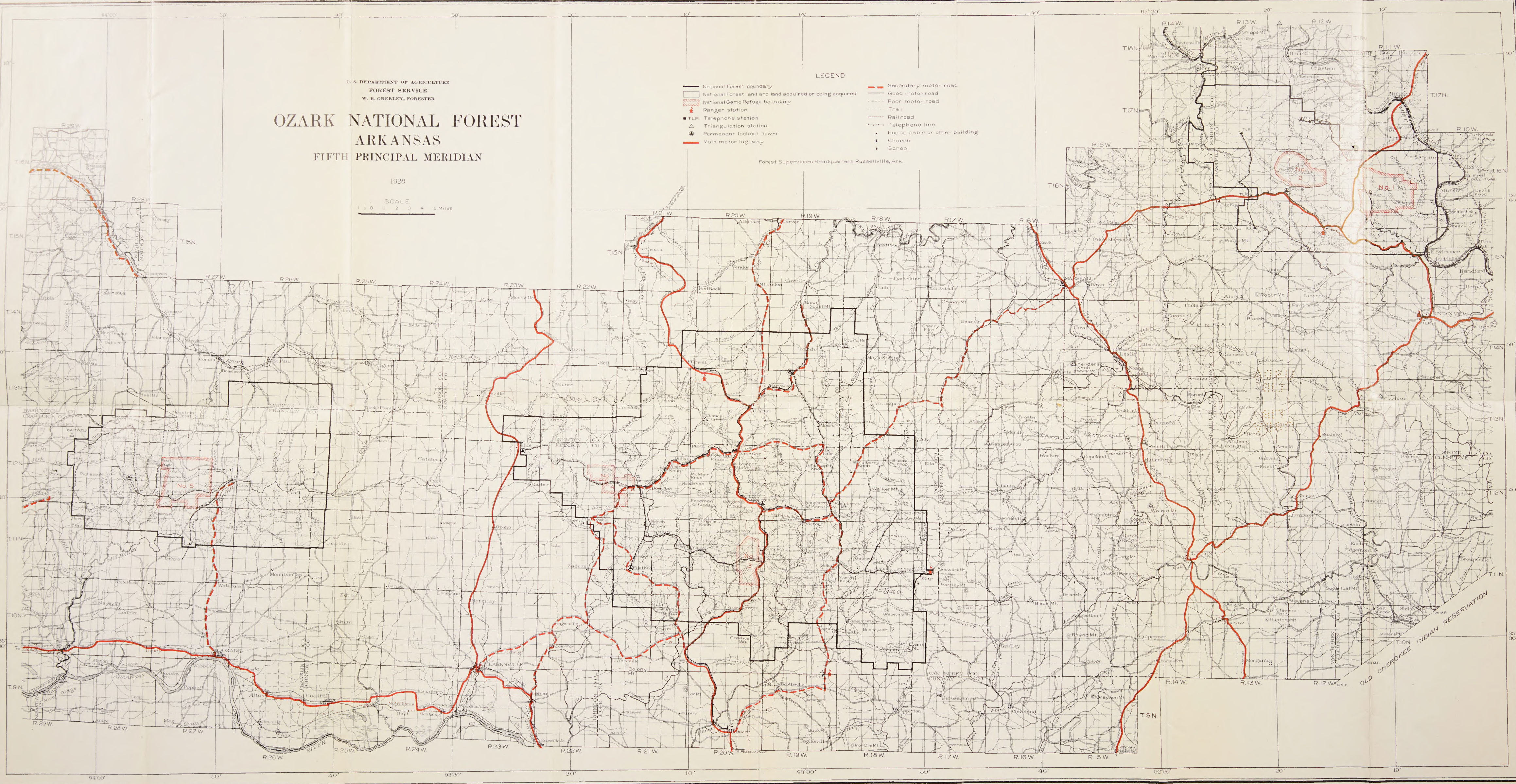
FIFTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN

1928

SCALE
1 2 3 4 5 Miles

- LEGEND
- National Forest boundary
 - National Forest land and land acquired or being acquired
 - National Game Refuge boundary
 - Ranger station
 - T.L.P. Telephone station
 - Triangulation station
 - Permanent lookout tower
 - Main motor highway
 - Secondary motor road
 - Good motor road
 - Poor motor road
 - Trail
 - Railroad
 - Telephone line
 - House cabin or other building
 - Church
 - School

Forest Supervisors Headquarters, Russellville, Ark.



The Code of the Legion of Good Sportsmen

(FOR THE DRY SEASON)

They
Know

It is dangerous to
smoke while travel-
ing in the woods.

They
Smoke
Only

1. While stopping in
a safe place, clear of
all inflammable ma-
terial, or

2. During or right
after a heavy rain,
or

3. Inside a vehicle
on two-way high-
ways.

And
After
Smoking

They put out all
lighted material.

Forest Fires caused by Smokers result from
thoughtlessness and carelessness. They are on
the increase. Remedy a bad record by following
the above code when in forest regions.

YOU ARE WELCOME

To hunt and otherwise enjoy Ouachita and Ozark
National Forests, Arkansas. Respect the bound-
aries of established game refuges set apart to help
replenish the game and bird life of our Arkansas
highlands. Obey the Arkansas State Game Laws
and

Have a
Sportsmanlike
Good Time